

Christina Sprague, Sauquoit, NY.

To Whom It May Concern:

My husband and I own a small piece of property on Topper Road, where Black Creek meets the mouth of Hinckley Reservoir. We are a young, 30-something couple with great interest in the future of Hinckley. Bought in 2012, our “camp” has become our vacation-home, our private paradise. Being business owners, we cannot take a proper “vacation” and choose to make Hinckley our vacation home as often as possible. We cannot stress enough how much we love the lake, the views, our property and our small little community over and around the old Grant Hotel area. We hope to make this – or another property on Hinckley – our retirement home one day when we are ready.

Hinckley Reservoir is a gem on the edge of the beautiful Adirondack Park. As one of the only lakes in our area with beautiful sand beaches, it makes it an opportune tourist attraction for boats to park and enjoy all that the lake has to offer. Please note that the launch could be expanded to offer more parking for trucks/ trailers, and an updated picnic/ scenic area would be attractive to the visitor, and the expense to create an expansion could easily be made back with a small parking fee throughout one summer given our water levels were stable.

More visitors clearly mean increased revenue for the region. This should go without saying, but so should our water levels; so, I apologize if I sound redundant or condescending. Our lakeside RV parks and campgrounds would increase in business, our local gas station (formerly Bailey’s) would increase, as would all businesses that are located in Mapledale. And not to mention the State Park (including beach and swim area) that are conveniently located just out of the way of boaters.

The above in which I’ve described can relate to the “recreation and aesthetics” of Hinckley. Historically, the reasons above have been shoved to the wayside because the original intent of Hinckley Reservoir was for canal, energy and water reserve purposes. But let us be realistic here, that was 100 years ago (1920)... 40 years ago (1980). Times change and to keep up with needs of the region, the governing licenses must be changed as well. To align to Governor Cuomo’s interest in the Adirondack Park, should Hinckley be included?

In terms of any geological issues that may be present at Hinckley – many of which were touched upon at the first scoping meeting – there are many including the silt that has lessened the amount of water in which can be reserved in Hinckley. I’d like to reiterate here (from the scoping meeting) that it is imperative that the water be measured. In doing so and considering the silt, why not also consider the boulders and sand bars that could be removed and sold for a profit? Those boulders that break visitors’ props and sand bars in which visitors get stuck in (detering such visitors).

Also mentioned at the scoping meeting was the decreased amount of fish and species that can survive in the waters as they raise and lower at such rapid and unnatural rates. Increased fish in Hinckley and downstream, again, mean increased tourism and revenue for the area.

All of that being said, I have yet to reiterate how important our property values are and how they have decreased with the varying water levels. My husband and I pay waterfront taxes. Our property's value is based on the ability to access Hinckley from our property. If we do not look at the Canal Corp. water level chart daily, our docks and boat could very easily be beached within days. We must monitor the water levels daily to ensure that this does not happen, even during the very short warm season here in Upstate New York.

Those that are concerned with the future of Hinckley Reservoir are concerned not only for themselves but for future generations – this is a generational decision! We have been forced to sit idle for long enough, having all of the agencies involved in Jarvis Power Dam take advantage of this resource. We are not greedy, we understand that it is still a Reservoir, and a back-up water resource for the Utica area. We are asking for better management of the water levels. Please look at the contracts with Brookfield and the outcries of those speaking to you now. Please listen to those individuals that have invested in the future of this lake and have the drive to help bring it to its full potential.

Best,

Christina Sprague

Property Owner